



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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By: Staff Sgt. Karima Turner

**Alaska Air National Guard to participate in Angel Thunder 2011**

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska**—More than 70 Alaska Air National Guardsmen from the 176<sup>th</sup> Wing are headed to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Ariz. today to participate in Angel Thunder 2011 Oct. 6-22.

Angel Thunder, which hosts both national and international search and rescue entities is dedicated to saving lives and is considered the largest exercise of its kind in the world.

"This exercise primarily focuses on personnel recovery," said Maj. Joseph Conroy, 212<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron, acting commander. "The Alaska rescue triad (HH-60, HC-130, Guardian Angel) is utilizing the exercise for deployment preparation for a future date and will be transporting two Pave Hawk helicopters and a HC-130 to participate in the exercise."

It's important for specialized units such as the 210<sup>th</sup>, 211<sup>th</sup> and 212<sup>th</sup> rescue squadrons to participate in exercises such as this because the scenarios played out in the exercise mirror those that are actually taking place in everyday situations.

"I think it's awesome that we are participating in Angel Thunder," said Capt. Brian Nosich, 176<sup>th</sup> Wing, Operational Support Squadron, intelligence officer. "It's preparation for potential deployments and a great opportunity to meet personnel recovery professionals from recovery units from across the U.S. and other nations."

During Angel Thunder 2011 the various search and rescue entities will practice on combat search and rescue, urban search and rescue, and humanitarian search and rescue operations.

"I expect to learn procedures and processes to help improve my understanding and capabilities in humanitarian and wartime events," Nosich said. "This is great spin-up training for a potential real world natural disaster here in Alaska or wartime deployment. No amount of research can match going and practicing in these events. "

Through the joint training that Angel Thunder provides, search and rescue professionals across the world are able to train for incidents they may encounter in future operations.

“Although Angel Thunder is a U.S. Air Force sponsored personnel recovery exercise, other DoD assets are also participating to help validate and refine tactics, techniques and procedures that are brought to the battlefield”, said Maj. Eric Budd, 176<sup>th</sup> Wing, Operations Support Squadron, Tactics officer. “The joint training gives the Alaska Air National Guard rescue squadrons and support units a wider knowledge base to draw from when responding to exercises or contingencies in the joint arena.”

Alaska Air National Guardsmen from the 210<sup>th</sup>, 211<sup>th</sup> and 212<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadrons and support personnel from the 176<sup>th</sup> Operational Support Squadron are scheduled to participate in the exercise.

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**Cutline:**

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Alaska Air National Guardsmen from the 212<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron fast rope out of a 210<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter. Photo by Master Sgt. Sean Mitchell, 210<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard